

### Description of the Graphic Organizer

In preparation for the ISAT and in preparing third grade students to answer Extended Response questions, in the area of Reading, it is helpful to use a graphic organizer. As a district, we teach students to answer Reading Extended Response questions by using a Key Idea in their response. A key idea is generally the short or quick answer in response to a question. Students are then taught that they must prove their answer using "Right There" or "Think and Search" as taught in the QAR method. Finally, students must make an "Author and Me" connection. This process is repeated two to three times in order to answer one question thoroughly.

Last year, one of the intermediate teachers in our building devised a graphic organizer that students could use as a reference when writing a practice extended response question. I found this organizer to be helpful as it is simple using few words, and also contains graphics which helps students to visualize the process. This year I felt as though I needed to take the organizer to another level. I developed a graphic organizer that students could use as a prewriting tool, in the classroom, in order to organize their thoughts and see the flow of a practice extended response question. I used the same or similar wording to the original graphic organizer, as well as the same pictures. I created three vertical tables so students could see the flow of the extended response question and would see each of the components of a complete answer. The two graphic organizers can be used hand in hand for extended response practice questions. Although such organizers cannot be used on the actual test, it is my hope that after a great deal of practice using the organizer, students will master the process and will be prepared for the process.

### Description of how the Graphic Organizer was used and in what Context

Before even introducing this organizer, it was important that my students were comfortable with the QAR process. I spent August and the early part of September practicing the QAR process in Shared Reading. Once I felt confident that students were comfortable with QAR, I started out by introducing these organizers simply through modeling. Over a few weeks, I presented students with sample extended response questions about the personality traits of a character in the story. I read various stories aloud with the students and referred to the graphic organizers to answer the question. After modeling on my own, I asked for student input, but continued to primarily model to the students. Recently, I read a story aloud with the students and asked the students, for the first time, to answer a question independently, using only the graphic organizer. We read the story Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters, by John Steptoe. The question was similar to those we had been working on: *What kind of person is Manyara, and what kind of person is Nyasha, in the story Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters?*

### Reflection of Experience

Having the students complete the graphic organizer independently was an eye opening experience. I was pleased to see that the students understand the concept of key idea, right there/think and search and author and me, but need work on other areas. For instance, in the question "What kind of person is..." I realized that students don't have enough understanding of personality traits and often write responses that do not reflect personality traits. Also, students often use synonyms and therefore use almost the same answer twice in their response. I found that I need to better explain that once a response is used as a right there/think and search, it should not be used again. We want to see the students provide many different examples where they refer back to the story. I also found that many of my students need to work on deeper thinking for their author and me responses. Although I learned that there is still a great deal of work to be done, I know exactly where I need to focus my attention, and the organization of the response is not really a concern, except in a few individual cases. The graphic organizer made it very easy for me to see how I need to proceed in upcoming lessons. It also was helpful in conferring with students, as I can "see" their way of thinking and responding and try to help each student with their individual difficulties. A graphic organizer can make a big difference in how students respond, and the way in which teachers teach.

## Restate the Question



The question asks me what kind of person Manyara is and what kind of person Nyasha is, in the story Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters.

### Key Idea



Nyasha is faithful.



### PROVE IT-Right There/Think and Search



Nyasha is faithful because she said that when she is in her garden, she will be nice to Nyoka.



Author and Me (I think..., I wonder...)

I wonder if Nyasha really knows that Nyoka is really the king and that she is being nice on purpose.

### Key Idea



Manyara is demanding.



### PROVE IT-Right There/Think and Search



Manyara is demanding because she told the little boy that to get out of her way and that she would be queen.



Author and Me (I think..., I wonder...)

I think Manyara does not care about anybody except for herself. Also I wonder why manyara is the complete opposite of Nyasha.

### Key Idea



Nyasha is very thoughtful.



### PROVE IT-Right There/Think and Search



Nyasha is thoughtful because she had given her lunch to the little boy and sunflower seeds to the old woman.



Author and Me (I think..., I wonder...)

I think Nyasha deserves to be queen because she is so thoughtful in the story.



Restate the Question



Key Idea



**PROVE IT-Right There/Think and Search**



*Author and Me (I think..., I wonder...)*



Key Idea



**PROVE IT-Right There/Think and Search**



*Author and Me (I think..., I wonder...)*



Key Idea



**PROVE IT-Right There/Think and Search**



*Author and Me (I think..., I wonder...)*